

EFL Teachers' Expectations and Satisfaction Levels of Professional Development

Thi Mai Thy Cao

FPT University, Vietnam

Diem Kieu Bui

FPT University, Vietnam

Abstract: Professional development (PD) is critical for maintaining and developing teachers' qualities and competencies; however, how to make PD more effective in relation to EFL teachers' expectations and examine their satisfaction levels with PD activities organized in a foreign language center remains a major concern for administrators, researchers, and teachers. The purpose of this study is to explore EFL instructors' expectations and levels of satisfaction with the PD activities that they have participated in. This study used both quantitative and qualitative research methods, including questionnaires and interviews to answer the research topics indicated above. The study involved 50 teachers at an English Language Center, in Can Tho City, Vietnam. According to the findings, EFL teachers have high expectations for (1) PD content, which focuses on improving lesson planning and student outcomes, as well as learning how to create a supportive learning environment; (2) coherence of PD with teachers' needs and students' needs and interests; (3) opportunities for active learning, such as observing more experienced teachers or being mentored by experts; and (4) duration of PD, which should be ongoing throughout the year and a year-long program. EFL teachers were also satisfied with (1) the PD content, (2) the coherence, and (3) the duration of the PD, according to the findings. Some recommendations for increasing PD characteristics are offered based on the primary findings.

Keywords: PD Activities, EFL Teachers' Expectations, EFL Teachers' Satisfaction

Citation: Cao, T. M. T., & Bui, D. K. (2023). EFL Teachers' Expectations and Satisfaction Levels of Professional Development. In M. Koc, O. T. Ozturk & M. L. Ciddi (Eds.), *Proceedings of ICRES 2023--International Conference on Research in Education and Science* (pp. 1312-1329), Cappadocia, Turkiye. ISTES Organization.

Introduction

English teaching and learning have changed drastically over the last several decades; as a result, EFL teachers require professional development to update and improve their knowledge and skills to keep up with the tendencies of English language teaching (Richard & Farrell, 2005). Teacher professional development is thought to improve not only teachers' practices (Richard & Farrell, 2005), but also students' learning outcomes and

educational reform achievement (Villegas-Reimers, 2003). Professional development now ranges from one-time workshops to more extensive programs, allowing teachers to learn more consistently. However, not many studies have been conducted to investigate EFL teachers' expectations and their satisfaction levels with PD activities. As a result, this study was carried out to acquire insights into EFL teachers' expectations and levels of satisfaction with PD activities in the setting of a foreign language center in Vietnam's Mekong Delta.

In terms of professional development approaches, Richard and Farrell (2005) offered eleven forms of professional development that instructors might use to improve their teaching; however, in this study several common types such as students' feedback, training workshops, peer coaching, peer observations were investigated. However, an effective professional development approach should incorporate tactics that are relevant to the needs and expectations of teachers (Richard and Farrell, 2005). Meeting teacher expectations for professional development is projected to increase long-term applied competence as a program outcome because instructors will be more motivated to put program content into practice. Furthermore, analyzing their levels of satisfaction with the PD activities that they had participated in is significant since the findings may assist educators or educational administrators in making timely and optimal adjustments for improved PD programs. It is accepted that educational leaders should promote and facilitate professional learning and development in their schools to best support teachers in their teaching practice by providing what they expect to achieve from PD prior to designing and organizing PD events and allowing teachers to evaluate or assess the PD events that they have attended.

Teacher Professional Development

Numerous scholars have defined professional growth. Day (1999), for example, characterized it as a process that instructors can undertake individually or cooperatively to review or renew their teaching objectives and to broaden their knowledge, abilities, and emotional intelligence, all of which are essential to their teaching career. Professional development is also characterized as an ongoing learning process in which teachers participate freely to learn how to best adapt their teaching to the requirements of their students (Guskey, 2000). Furthermore, Ganser (2000) and Thomas Guskey (2000) define professional development as the growth of a teacher's profession as a result of formal experiences such as workshops and training courses as well as informal learning such as reading professional publications and watching educational documentaries. According to Richard and Farrell (2005), professional development includes all activities that serve long-term goals and promote development and growth in teachers' understanding of themselves as teachers. In other words, it is a lifelong process that not only helps schools and organizations and facilitates student learning but also aims to improve instructors' personal and professional skills. In summary, those definitions of professional development all agree that it is a continual process comprised of many activities that teachers engage in to improve their teaching methods.

There are numerous reasons why teacher professional development is essential in education. First, English

teachers must keep their pedagogical knowledge and abilities up to date to satisfy the changing needs of schools and institutions (Richard and Farrel, 2005). Furthermore, professional development is said to improve teaching techniques (Villegas-Reimers, 2003). Teacher professional development improves classroom practices and develops teachers' pedagogical expertise (Youngs, 2001). In terms of student learning, it is true that the more successful professional development teachers have received, the further learners move in their learning (Guskey, 1997). Professional development, in addition to having a substantial impact on teachers' work and students' performance, also helps to improve institutions (Richard and Farrel, 2005) and the success of educational reforms (Villegas-Reimers, 2003). Finally, professional development experiences have a major positive impact on teachers, their practice, students' learning outcomes, and educational organizations.

Effective Professional Development

According to Desimone (2011), five characteristics of effective PD must be considered: (1) an emphasis on both subject matter and teaching methods; (2) opportunities for active learning, such as observing, receiving feedback, analyzing student work, or presenting, as opposed to passively listening to lectures; (3) coherence: content, objectives, and activities that are consistent with school curriculum and objectives, teacher knowledge and beliefs, students' needs, and school, district, and state reforms and policies; (4) Continuous duration: Professional development activities should be ongoing throughout the school year and include at least 20 hours of contact time. (5) Collective participation: Professional development activities should be conducted by groups of teachers from the same grade, subject, or institution.

Content Focus

Content refers to what instructors learn through professional development (Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman, 2001). Professional development content is separated into two major categories: knowledge of the subject matter and understanding of how students learn that content (Guskey & Yoon, 2009). According to Desimone (2009), the most significant aspect of good professional development is pedagogical expertise. Empirical evidence suggests that content-focused professional development can influence instructors' knowledge, teaching methods, or student learning (Garet et al., 2001).

The subject matter and pedagogical knowledge of teachers should be regularly enhanced. Teachers should be helped to comprehend the information they teach more deeply, and the ways pupils learn that content appear to be an important aspect of good professional development (Birman, 2003). A professional development activity can be considered effective in improving teachers' knowledge and skills if it is part of a larger set of opportunities for teacher learning and development, builds on prior knowledge and experience, supports national and provincial standards and assessment, and is consistent with teachers' goals (Birman, 2003).

Active Learning

Active learning is defined as opportunities for instructors to engage in the analysis of teaching and learning (Garet et al., 2001). Observing experts or more experienced teachers or receiving constructive feedback or

suggestions, reviewing or analyzing students' work, scoring or assessing students' work or performance, group discussions on specific topics related to learning and teaching, developing and presenting lessons, coaching and mentoring, or interacting with teachers to discuss steps or instructions are all methods proposed by researchers to promote active learning (Desimone, 2009).

Coherence

Coherence refers to how well professional development aligns with other teacher learning opportunities, teachers' knowledge and views, and school, district, and state reforms and regulations (Desimone, 2011). Effective professional development should address teachers' needs and be conducted in a variety of contexts, both in and out of the classroom (Borko, Jacobs, & Koellner, 2010). An effective professional development program should be designed in accordance with not only how individual teachers learn but also with how schools as organizations influence and are influenced by teachers' learning and improvement (King & Newman, 2001).

Duration

Professional development should take up a significant amount of time, and that time should be well organized, carefully planned, consciously directed, and focused on subject, pedagogy, or both (Birman et al., 2000). One full academic year appears to be appropriate because it provides teachers with more opportunities to learn, implement, reflect, and re-implement, forming a cycle of experimentation, particularly in gaining constructive feedback on what teachers have learned and implemented (Daloglu, 2004). Several studies have found that a sufficient number of professional development contact hours has a favorable impact on teacher outcomes such as attitude, readiness, and teaching practice (Banilower, Heck, & Weiss, 2007; Supovitz & Turner, 2000).

Collective participation

The extent to which instructors from the same school participate in the same learning opportunities is referred to as collective participation (Hochberg & Desimone, 2010). Studies have also found a link between collective engagement and instructional practice (Desimone et al., 2002; Penuel et al., 2007). According to Desimone et al. (2002), professional development is more effective in improving teachers' classroom practices when participants are from the same school, department, or grade. Penuel et al. (2007) discovered that when participation in professional events included all teachers in the department or grade groupings, or all teachers in the school, teachers reported more changes. Collective participation - teachers from the same school, department, or grade level participating in a professional development program - has been shown to be beneficial in terms of discussing teaching concepts, skills, and problems in the same context, sharing curricular issues, dealing with students' needs across classes and grade levels, and contributing to a shared professional development community (Birman et al., 2000).

Five Critical Levels of Professional Development Evaluation

According to Guskey (2000), there are five levels of professional development evaluation, which are

hierarchically arranged as follows:

Participants' Reactions

The first level of evaluation focuses on the reactions of participants to the professional learning experience. This is the most prevalent sort of professional learning evaluation and the simplest type of data to collect and analyze. At this stage, the information gathered from participants focuses on their own experiences. For example, the poll asks whether the PD event's content and materials make sense; whether the activities are relevant and well-planned; and whether the speaker or presenter is knowledgeable, credible, or helpful. It is also associated with the surroundings, such as the facilities or how organizers care for attendees.

Data on participant reactions is typically obtained through questionnaires administered at the end of a program or activity or through online surveys sent later via email. These questionnaires and surveys often include rating-scale items as well as open-ended response questions that allow participants to provide more individualized and thorough feedback. Measuring participants' initial happiness yields data that can be used to improve the design and facilitation of professional learning in meaningful ways. Furthermore, favorable responses from participants are frequently required as a prerequisite for higher-level evaluation outcomes.

Participants' Learning

Participants should acquire something from their professional learning experiences in addition to enjoying them. Level 2 learning focuses on measuring participants' new knowledge, abilities, and maybe attitudes (Guskey, 2002). Because it is anticipated that particular learning goals will be measured at Level 2 of evaluation, professional learning leaders or organizers must establish signs of successful learning before activities begin. Evaluators also assess both positive and negative unintentional learning effects. Professional learning that includes collaboration between teachers and school administrators, for example, can generate a strong sense of community and a sense of shared purpose among participants (Supovitz, 2002). If evaluators are concerned that participants may already have the necessary knowledge and abilities, they may need some sort of pre- and post-assessment. Analyzing this data provides a foundation for enhancing the content, presentation, and organization of professional learning.

Organizational Support and Change

At Level 3, the emphasis shifts away from participants and onto organizational aspects that may be critical to the success of professional learning events. Level 3 questions concern organizational traits that are required for success. For example, whether professional learning promoted changes that were aligned with the school's or organization's mission, whether changes were supported at the building and district levels, and whether successes were recognized and shared by the school or organization. These factors frequently play a significant role in determining the success of professional learning.

Participants' Use of New Knowledge and Skills

Level 4 questions focus on whether the knowledge and skills participants gained through PD make a difference in their teaching practice. At this level of review, the key to acquiring useful data is to assess both the extent and quality of implementation. These data, unlike Levels 1 and 2, cannot be obtained at the end of a professional learning program or activity. Participants require adequate time to adopt new ideas and practice them in their respective situations. Because implementation is frequently a process, evaluators may require time to think about and assess PD. These data may be collected through surveys or organized interviews with participants and their school leaders, depending on the goals of the PD organizers. Participants may be invited to conduct oral or written personal reflections or examinations in the form of journals or portfolios. Direct observations by qualified observers or digital recordings can provide the most reliable data, which can be used to assess teachers' current levels of implementation. It also assists professional development designers in reorganizing future programs and activities to allow for more consistent implementation.

Students' Learning Outcomes

Level 5 questions are concerned with whether or not PD has an impact on pupils or benefits them in any way. The specific student learning outcomes of interest will, of course, be determined by the goals of that individual professional learning initiative. In addition to the stated goals, the program may have significant unexpected consequences. It is assumed, for example, that pupils' average scores on large-scale tests increased, but so did the school dropout rate. Mixed results are common in efforts to enhance education, emphasizing the necessity of including several measures of student learning in all evaluations (Guskey, 2007).

Furthermore, because stakeholders' faith in various sources of evidence varies, it is unlikely that any single sign of success will be appropriate or sufficient for all. Participants can incorporate numerous sources of evidence when providing appropriate data for judging the effects of professional development programs. Furthermore, assessors must carefully match these data sources to the requirements and perceptions of various stakeholder groups (Guskey, 2012). Professional development that is effective should result in improvements or advancements in students' learning outcomes. Assessment results, portfolio evaluations, marks or grades, or standardized examination scores should all be included in this category. Other affective outcomes to evaluate include students' attitudes, attendance rates, dropout statistics, and participation in school activities (Guskey, 2003). If a professional development program has a direct impact on student behavior, teachers will be more likely to support it (Daloglu, 2004).

Method

Results instruments

This is a descriptive study that looked into EFL teachers' expectations and satisfaction with professional

development activities. This study used both quantitative and qualitative methodologies to investigate EFL teachers' expectations and satisfaction with professional development activities. According to Creswell (2013), descriptive studies that use both quantitative and qualitative methodologies provide an in-depth understanding of research concerns. A five-point Likert scale questionnaire was utilized to collect quantitative data on EFL teachers' expectations and satisfaction with PD activities. To learn more about EFL teachers' expectations and satisfaction with PD activities, a semi-structured interview was carried out.

Table 1. Research Questions and Instruments

Research questions	Methods/Instruments
1. What are EFL teachers' expectations about professional development activities?	Quantitative: Questionnaires Qualitative: Interviews
2. What are EFL teachers' satisfaction levels of the professional development activities that they have attended?	Quantitative: Questionnaires Qualitative: Interviews

This study used a mixed-method approach to strengthen the validity of the data and provide a more in-depth knowledge of EFL teachers' expectations and satisfaction with PD activities. A questionnaire is stated to be one of the most prevalent data collection tools since it is particularly capable of acquiring a great amount of information from a wide sample of participants quickly. Furthermore, open-ended interview questions can be used to gain a thorough grasp of the topic.

The researcher employed two instruments to answer the two research questions: (1) a questionnaire to identify EFL teachers' expectations and satisfaction with professional development, and (2) interviews to gain more insight into EFL teachers' expectations and satisfaction with professional development activities.

Participants

For the study, 50 teachers (14 men, 28%; 36 females, 72%) ranging in age from 22 to 39 years old working at an English language facility were invited to complete a questionnaire. The majority of the participants have been teaching English for at least two years. 40% of participants have two to five years of teaching experience, whereas 36% have more than five years of English teaching experience. The remaining 24% have fewer than two years of experience teaching English. In terms of teaching qualifications, the participants who hold a Masters' Degree in Language Teaching account for 26%, and the remaining participants (64%) have a bachelor's degree in English Language Teaching.

Six previous questionnaire respondents were specifically invited to engage in a follow-up interview to acquire more in-depth knowledge of their expectations and satisfaction with PD activities. Purposive sampling was also used to uncover similarities and differences among distinct groups of teachers with varying years of teaching experience.

Results

The reliability of the questionnaire

The questionnaire was distributed to 60 teachers teaching at a foreign language center with the goal of evaluating the professional development expectations and satisfaction levels of EFL teachers. Only 50 of them, however, submitted their responses.

The questionnaire results were entered into SPSS version 20.0 for quantitative data analysis. A scale test was then done to ensure the instrument's dependability. The questionnaire was extremely reliable (Cronbach's alpha =.943) in collecting data for the study, as demonstrated in the following table.

Table 2. The Reliability of the Questionnaire

Instrument	Cronbach's Alpha	No. of items	No. of respondents
Questionnaire	.943	68	50

Professional Development Expectations of EFL Teachers

Results from questionnaires

Descriptive Statistics Tests were used to obtain the overall mean score (M) of EFL instructors' expectations and the means scores of five parts of PD activities in order to study what EFL teachers hope to achieve from PD activities.

The overall mean score of EFL teachers' expectations of the PD activities was checked using a Descriptive Statistics Test. The total mean score of EFL teachers' expectations about PD activities was 4.10 (M = 4.10), with a.70 (SD =.70) difference between the minimum and maximum values. In other words, the findings suggest that EFL teachers have high expectations for professional development activities.

According to the results, EFL teachers have high expectations for the content concentration of professional development activities (mean = 4.40, standard deviation = 0.65). The mean scores for the two elements comprising opportunities for active learning (M = 4.08, SD = 0.73), and coherence of the PD content (M = 4.18, SD = 0.69), indicated that EFL teachers have high expectations for these elements. The mean score for the duration of PD activities (M = 3.91, SD =.73) was significantly lower than the scores for the other variables, and the mean score for selective participation (M = 3.30, SD =.80) was the lowest.

The results showed that most of the participants surveyed have very high expectations of the content focus of PD activities, including planning effective lessons, creating a meaningful and supportive learning environment, learning new techniques to apply directly in the classroom, designing effective assignments and activities, and improving students' outcomes. They also wished to master instructional methodologies, classroom management,

adapting lesson plans to students' needs and interests, and providing clear and easy instructions. Moreover, hoped to have opportunities to increase their English proficiency from PD activities, give students more meaningful opportunities to speak English, and adapt resources successfully.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics of EFL Teachers' Expectations of PD Activities

Expectations	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD
Content focus	50	2.77	5.00	4.40	.65
Active learning	50	2.50	5.00	4.08	.73
Coherence	50	2.60	5.00	4.18	.69
Duration	50	2.00	5.00	3.91	.73
Selective participation	50	1.50	5.00	3.30	.80
Overall expectations	50	2.44	5.00	4.10	.70

Regarding opportunities for active learning, most participants had extremely high expectations of witnessing more experienced teachers teaching their actual courses, designing, and demonstrating lessons, and discussing how to improve teaching practice with other teachers. Participants said they would like to be observed by experts to receive constructive criticism for future changes. Co-teaching with other teachers and being mentored by experienced teachers are also thought to help EFL teachers improve their teaching technique. Teachers, on the other hand, do not expect much from examining and scoring students' collaborative work in PD activities. All participants agreed that the coherence of the PD content should reflect the requirements of students. The results indicated that they have high expectations for the content of professional development activities, which should be designed to address the learning requirements of specific grade levels or schools and be consistent with school curriculum and goals. It was revealed that many of participants believed that PD activities should be consistent with instructors' knowledge and beliefs.

What is remarkable about the above table is that strongly expect that PD activities should be organized throughout the school year and provide teachers with more opportunities to practice newly acquired knowledge and skills. To be effective, however, half of the teachers surveyed believe that the duration of professional development activities should comprise 20 hours of contact time. On the other hand, instructors believe that the selective participation is not very important compared to other factors. However, some respondents believe that selective participation in PD activities should impart the same skills, the same grade but from various geographic regions. Briefly, the results of the questionnaires revealed that EFL instructors have high expectations for the content, coherence, opportunities for active learning, and duration of professional development (PD). However, they asserted that selective participation is not a significant factor in PD.

Results from interviews

The interview data provided additional insight into the expectations of EFL instructors for PD activities. Overall, the responses were quite consistent with the questionnaire results. When asked about their expectations for the PD content perspective, all interviewees reported having high expectations for this perspective. Both novice and experienced teachers—reported that they anticipate creating a supportive and meaningful learning

environment for students to have more opportunities and real-world reasons to speak English. One participant said:

“I strongly expect that I can learn how to give students meaningful opportunities and more meaningful reasons or contexts to speak English in the classroom.”

83.3% of teachers, including both novice and veteran educators, are optimistic about the improvement of lesson planning and the design of appropriate activities and assignments for effective content instruction.

“Regarding to the content of PD activities, I expect to improve lessons planning and designing appropriate activities to meet the lesson’s objectives and have more ideas to design lessons to teach more effectively.”

Additionally, EFL teachers with less than five years of teaching experience expressed a desire to increase their flexibility in changing lesson plan activities to better meet the requirements or interests of their students.

“I expect that I can learn how to flexibly change or adapt the lesson plans while teaching to meet students’ interests and engage and encourage students to learn.”

50% of EFL instructors with less than two years of teaching experience or more than five years of teaching experience believe that improving students' learning outcomes is essential.

“I also hope to improve students’ outcomes, know what students need to design more effective lessons”.

Additionally, EFL instructors are expected to use and adapt instructional materials effectively, as well as improve their instruction-giving and classroom management skills.

“Using and adapting materials and applying ICT to teach are also my expectation.”

The findings of the study showed that EFL teachers have high expectations of PD, such as lesson planning, designing effective activities and assignments, creating supportive learning environments, giving students meaningful opportunities and reasons to speak English, and emphasizing student learning outcomes.

Six EFL teachers agreed that they expect to have opportunities to observe, be observed, and co-teach with more experienced teachers to receive constructive feedback for improvement.

“I expect to observe more experienced teachers, especially teachers who teach the same skills first and then other skills as well.”

Four out of six EFL teachers also need more time and opportunities to share teaching experience with each other, discuss how to improve teaching practices, and give advice to solve problems or difficulties.

“If possible, I hope that teachers can spend time sharing experience and discussing with each other on how to improve our teaching practice.”

Two of six teachers, accounting for 33.3% of the interviewees, wish to have a mentor who helps them in designing lessons, co-teaching, observing, and giving feedback during the course.

“I also hope to be mentored by a more experienced teacher, especially when I first challenge myself with a total new class to receive constructive feedback.”

Additionally, EFL teachers shared that there should be more demonstrations and practice during the PD programs so that participants can apply what they have learned and get constructive feedback from both colleagues and trainers. EFL instructors anticipate co-teaching, sharing, and discussing teaching challenges,

observing, and being observed by more experienced teachers, and receiving constructive feedback.

Regarding the coherence of PD content, all participants (100 percent) agreed that PD content should be consistent with student needs and school objectives.

“My first expectation is that PD content should be consistent with students’ needs and participants’ needs, and the school goals as well.”

Nevertheless, 33.3% of participants indicated that the content of PD should be consistent with instructors' needs and knowledge to meet their expectations and requirements. Lastly, two teachers revealed that professional development (PD) activities should be tailored to specific groups of English language learners to best meet students' requirements or resolve their learning problems or challenges to improve English proficiency. In short, EFL teachers suggested that the content of PD activities should be consistent not only with learners' needs and school goals but also with teachers' knowledge and requirements. The content should also be tailored to specific groups of students so that teachers who participate in professional development can implement what they've learned to improve the outcomes for their students of interest.

“I hope that the content from PD activities should be designed for certain groups of participants so that teachers can easily discuss and learn from each other. For example, teachers of kids or teenagers.”

EFL teachers' expectations regarding the duration of professional development activities were that they would be ongoing throughout the year and allow participants ample time to implement, practice, and reflect on what has been successful and what needs improvement prior to learning new knowledge or skills.

“PD activities should be organized once every two weeks so that participants have more time to read materials before, discuss, and reflect. After that, teachers should be given more time to practice new knowledge, apply in designing lessons, and get feedback.”

In terms of selective participation, four EFL teachers (66.67%) believe that participants in professional development programs should share common backgrounds, such as teaching at the same school, the same levels of students, or the same language abilities, so that they can share common problems or teaching experiences. On the other hand, 33.33 percent of teachers with two to five years of experience indicated that they prefer participating in professional development activities with participants from diverse backgrounds, teaching different groups of students so that they can learn from them.

“I think attending workshops with teachers who teach the same skills is important because they have a lot in common to share and understand the curriculum and students as well.”

In conclusion, the questionnaires and interviews revealed that EFL teachers have high expectations for the content of professional development, the opportunities for active learning, and the coherence of PD with students, teachers, and institutions. Specifically, EFL instructors want to increase their pedagogical knowledge by observing more experienced teachers. In addition, they expect that PD content is consistent with students' needs and teachers' knowledge and is ongoing throughout the year, and that teachers who teach the same students or skills participate in PD together.

EFL Teachers' Satisfaction about the PD Activities that they have attended

To determine the extent to which EFL teachers are satisfied with the elements of the professional development activities they have participated in, Descriptive Statistics Tests were administered to determine the aggregate mean score of EFL teachers' satisfaction and the means score for each cluster.

The results indicate that EFL teachers were satisfied with the content emphasis of their professional development activities ($M = 3.84$; $SD = .78$). The coherence of the PD content ($M = 3.72$; $SD = .77$) and duration of PD activities ($M = 3.60$; $SD = .83$) are the means of two elements. It meant that EFL instructors were very pleased with those components. The mean score for selective participation was quite low ($M = 3.52$; $SD = .69$), as was their level of satisfaction with opportunities for active learning ($M = 3.44$; $SD = .89$).

Table 4. Descriptive Statistics of EFL Teachers' Satisfaction

Satisfaction	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD
Content focus	50	2.00	5.00	3.84	.78
Active learning	50	1.50	5.00	3.44	.89
Coherence	50	2.00	5.00	3.72	.77
Duration	50	2.00	5.00	3.60	.83
Selective participation	50	2.00	5.00	3.52	.69
Overall satisfaction	50	1.89	5.00	3.67	.80

Results from questionnaires

Results showed that participants were satisfied with the focus of professional development activities which enabled them to construct effective assignments and activities for teaching content, improve their English proficiency, plan effective lessons, create a meaningful and supportive learning environment, learn more instructional strategies and new techniques, improve student learning outcomes, and provide students with more meaningful opportunities to communicate in English. The participants also agreed that the content focus has helped them improve their ability to manage classroom activities, provide clear and simple instructions, and adapt lesson plan activities to students' needs and interests.

Regarding the opportunities for active learning, participants agreed that the PD activities provided teachers with more opportunities to observe and be observed by experts or more experienced teachers modeling or teaching to receive constructive feedback and interact with other teachers to discuss how to improve their teaching practice. Half of teachers agreed that professional development activities have helped them devise and demonstrate lessons and be mentored by more experienced teachers. On the other hand, they are not very satisfied with the opportunities that PD activities have provided them to co-teach with other teachers and grade students' work with other teachers.

Most of participants agreed that the professional development activities they attended were consistent with teachers' beliefs and knowledge, students' needs, as well as the school curriculum and objectives. Besides, more

than half of the participants felt that the professional development activities addressed the learning requirements of specific grade levels or schools and were consistent with school, district, and state reforms and policies.

The results indicated teachers are satisfied with the duration of PD activities; more specifically, teachers surveyed agreed that PD activities have been ongoing throughout the school year and that they have been given more opportunities to practice newly acquired skills over time. In contrast, some participants reported that the duration of their PD activities included at least 20 hours of contact time, which means that they are not very satisfied with the duration of PD. Additionally, over fifty percent of participants indicated that they were satisfied with PD activities because participants were from the same institution and grade, and they were imparting the same English skills.

Results from interviews

The interview data provided additional insight into the levels of satisfaction EFL instructors have with PD activities. Overall, the responses were quite similar to the questionnaire results.

When asked how satisfied EFL instructors were with the content of professional development activities. All participants were satisfied with the PD material, as indicated by the results. To be more explicit, three of the teachers (50%) indicated that they were extremely satisfied with the content of the professional development activities in which they participated—up to 90 percent satisfaction. The data from the interviews revealed that all EFL instructors, both novice and experienced (100% of interview participants), were satisfied with the lesson planning enhancements resulting from PD activities.

“I have been satisfied about lesson planning and applying appropriate activities to teach content effectively.”

Concerning how to create a supportive learning environment and provide students with more meaningful opportunities to speak English, the majority of teachers reported being satisfied with the professional development activities designed to improve their techniques or skills.

“I have been satisfied because I can learn how to create supportive learning environment for students to practice English, motivate them a lot, be more creative, step into students’ world, and give students more meaningful reasons to speak, especially when teaching young learners.”

In addition, more than half of the participants verified that professional development activities have emphasized improving student learning outcomes.

“I have also been satisfied with improving students’ outcomes. I learned to design specific objectives before and prioritized students’ outcomes and tried to link activities with objectives mentioned. I also received feedback and reflected my lesson for improvements.”

The findings regarding EFL teachers' levels of satisfaction with the content of professional development activities According to fifty percent of interview participants, their classroom administration skills have improved as a result of applying what they have learned from PD activities.

“Classroom management has also been improved. I have learned to get students engaged and manage

them effectively."

Besides, 33.33% of participants claimed that PD activities provided them with opportunities to share teaching experience and teaching materials, discuss how to enhance teaching methodologies, and jointly solve pedagogical problems. However, 33.33 percent of EFL instructors who participated in professional development programs were not satisfied with the opportunities to use and adapt teaching materials effectively.

"However, I haven't been satisfied about techniques to flexibly change the lesson plans whiling teaching and need more practice."

In conclusion, the findings regarding EFL teachers' levels of satisfaction with the content of PD activities revealed that EFL teachers are highly satisfied with improving lesson planning, creating a supportive learning environment, providing students with more real-life opportunities or reasons to speak, learning more techniques and instructional strategies, and having opportunities to share and learn from colleagues.

EFL teachers feel satisfied with the opportunities for active learning from PD activities. They reported that they have had opportunities to share teaching experience and discuss how to improve teaching practice, but they need more opportunities to observe more experienced teachers to learn.

"In general, I have been satisfied with opportunities for active learning because the school let us learn and practice step by step: theories first, then plan lessons, revise, observe and feedback."

In terms of the coherence of PD content, EFL teachers have been highly satisfied with the consistency of PD content with students' needs, teachers' needs and knowledge, and schools' goals.

"I have been satisfied about the content of PD which is consistent with my knowledge and belief in teaching. It is not too easy and not out of reach as well."

In terms of the duration of PD activities, all the participants feel satisfied that PD activities are ongoing throughout the year, but two of the participants who have less than five years of teaching experience prefer having more time to practice new skills or knowledge before learning new ones. Additionally, the participants reported that they can learn a lot from the participants because they are experienced and willing to share with each other.

PD activities are on-going throughout the year. There are a lot of sharing sessions or workshops for teacher to attend.

In conclusion, the questionnaires and interviews revealed that EFL instructors were pleased with the course's content, coherence, and selective participation. In particular, EFL instructors have been enhancing their pedagogical knowledge and gaining knowledge from more experienced teachers. The PD content has been aligned with the requirements of students, the knowledge of teachers, and the school's objectives. However, EFL instructors have been dissatisfied with the opportunities to observe more seasoned educators. In addition, they need more time to practice new skills acquired through PD activities before acquiring new ones in order to determine their efficacy.

Discussion

This study examined EFL teachers' expectations and satisfaction levels with professional development activities

that they have attended at a foreign language center. Results showed that there are both similarities and differences between this study's findings and the conceptual framework of the Five Critical Levels of Professional Development Evaluation (Guskey, 2000). EFL teachers from this study expect to improve their teaching knowledge and skills by improving lesson planning and learning more teaching techniques or instructional strategies. This is consistent with studies conducted by Eksi and Aydin (2003) which indicated that EFL teachers taking part in PD activities hope to improve their teaching skills and methods through PD activities. Knapp (2003) also supported the idea that effective PD content builds on teachers' pedagogical content knowledge.

EFL teachers hope to improve students' learning outcomes by applying what they have learned from PD activities. This is consistent with studies done by Noom-Ura (2013) which revealed that PD activities would put a high emphasis on strategies for helping students improve their English skills. Additionally, Knapp (2003) revealed that the content of PD should be focused on students' learning. However, EFL teachers do not have high expectations to improve English language proficiency through PD activities because they believe English is used as a tool to communicate in PD activities and teachers can improve themselves or participate in other activities. This result is not consistent with a study by Noom-Ura (2013), which indicated that PD activities would help teachers improve their language proficiency for only non-native-speaking teachers and that PD should focus on improving teachers' English proficiency.

This study found that EFL teachers expect to have more opportunities to observe or co-teach with more experienced teachers to learn and receive constructive feedback for improvements. The content of PD activities should be consistent with students' needs, teachers' knowledge, and schools' goals. The duration of PD activities is also one of the EFL teachers' expectations, and EFL teachers in this study acknowledged that selective participation is not very important to them, but the content and trainers are supposed to be more significant in PD activities. The results from this study share both similarities and differences with other related studies about professional development needs or expectations.

This study highlights the detailed satisfaction levels of EFL teachers about the professional development activities that they have attended. Findings from both questionnaires and interviews generally showed that EFL teachers have been quite satisfied with the PD activities that they have participated in, but their satisfaction levels are different. Generally, EFL teachers have been most satisfied with the content of PD activities offered by the school, such as lesson planning, designing effective assignments and activities, creating a supportive learning environment, and learning new teaching techniques or instructional strategies. Additionally, EFL teachers have been satisfied with the coherence of PD activities, which is consistent with students' needs, teachers' needs, and schools' goals. Finally, teachers have been satisfied with the duration and frequency of PD activities offered by the schools, which are ongoing throughout the year.

The most important details in this text are that EFL teachers have not been very satisfied with opportunities to learn from other more experienced teachers by observing and co-teaching. They also indicated that they need

more opportunities to learn from experienced teachers systematically, which means that novice or less experienced teachers need support from experts or experienced teachers in lesson planning, observing, analyzing lessons, giving constructive feedback, adapting more effective and appropriate lesson plans for the next class, and reflecting on their effectiveness. Factors such as different ages, genders, educational qualifications, and years of teaching experience do not have significant impacts on EFL teachers' expectations and satisfaction levels of PD activities. Results showed that EFL teachers' levels of satisfaction about PD activities were quite high, but their satisfaction levels were not very well matched with their expectations of PD activities. For example, they expect many opportunities to observe more experienced teachers or experts teaching, but they have not been very satisfied about that.

Conclusion

The research was conducted with 50 participants working in a foreign language center in Can Tho City. Two types of instruments were used to collect data: questionnaires and interviews. Results showed that EFL teachers have high expectations of PD activities, such as the content focus, the opportunities for active learning, the coherence of PD, and the duration of PD. However, they do not expect much from the selective participation of PD. EFL teachers also expect to learn from more experienced teachers or experts through observations, coaching, or mentoring, and that the PD content is consistent with students' needs, teachers' needs, and schools' goals.

Additionally, the participants in PD should teach the same levels of students or the same language skills. Results showed that EFL teachers have been satisfied with the PD activities offered by the school. They were most satisfied with the content focus, coherence of PD content, and duration of PD. Active learning and participation were the two aspects in which teachers had low satisfaction levels. PD has helped them design assignments and activities to teach content effectively, strengthen their English proficiency, plan effective lessons, create a meaningful and supportive learning environment, learn more instructional strategies and new techniques, improve students' learning outcomes, and provide students with more opportunities to communicate in English. PD content has been consistent with teachers' beliefs and knowledge, with school curriculum and goals, and with students' needs. However, they suggested that there should be more opportunities for teachers to observe and practice.

Recommendations

On the basis of the study's limitations, the researcher proposed two recommendations for future research. For the study to be generalizable, it is essential to increase the number of participants. The topics can be EFL instructors from various language centers or regions of the Mekong Delta. It would enable the researcher to identify similarities and differences between groups or contexts, allowing for the implementation of effective and high-quality programs that address teacher learning expectations. Another suggestion is to triangulate study data from

various stakeholders, such as teachers, school leaders, and educational administrators, in order to obtain a deeper understanding of teachers' professional development expectations.

References

- Al-Qahtani, H. M. (2015). Teachers' voice: A needs analysis of teachers' needs for professional development with the emergence of the current english textbooks. *English Language Teaching*, 8(8), 128-141. <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v8n8p128>
- Borko, H., Koellner, K., Jacobs, J., & Seago, N. (2010). Using video representations of teaching in practice-based professional development programs. *ZDM*, 43(1), 175-187. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11858-010-0302-5>
- Banilower, E. R., Heck, D. J., & Weiss, I. R. (2007). Can professional development make the vision of the standards a reality? The impact of the national science foundation's local systemic change through teacher enhancement initiative. *Journal of Research in Science Teaching*, 44(3), 375-395. <https://doi.org/10.1002/tea.20145>
- Desimone, L., Garet, M. S., Birman, B. F., Porter, A., & Yoon, K. S. (2003). Improving teachers' in-service professional development in mathematics and science: *The Role of Postsecondary Institutions. Educational Policy*, 17(5), 613-649. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0895904803256791>
- Day, C. (1999). Professional development and reflective practice: purposes, processes and partnerships. *Pedagogy, Culture and Society*, 7(2), 221-233. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14681369900200057>
- Desimone, L. M. (2011). A primer on effective professional development. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 92(6), 68-71. <https://doi.org/10.1177/003172171109200616>
- Desimone, L. M. (2009). Improving impact studies of teachers' professional development: Toward better conceptualizations and measures. *Educational Researcher*, 38(3), 181-199. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189x08331140>
- Daloglu, A. (2004). A professional development program for primary school English language teachers in Turkey: designing a materials bank. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 24(6), 677-690. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2004.04.001>
- Eksi, G., & Aydın, Y. C. (2013). English instructors' professional development need areas and predictors of professional development needs. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 70, 675-685. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2013.01.108>
- Guskey, T. R. (2002). Professional development and teacher change. *Teachers and Teaching*, 8(3), 381-391. <https://doi.org/10.1080/135406002100000512>
- Ganser, T. (2000). An ambitious vision of professional development for teachers. *NASSP Bulletin*, 84(618), 6-12. <https://doi.org/10.1177/019263650008461802>
- Garet, M. S., Porter, A. C., Desimone, L., Birman, B. F., & Yoon, K. S. (2001). What makes professional development effective? Results from a national sample of teachers. *American Educational Research Journal*, 38(4), 915-945. <https://doi.org/10.3102/00028312038004915>

- Guskey, T. R., & Yoon, K. S. (2009). What works in professional development? *Phi Delta Kappan*, 90(7), 495–500. <https://doi.org/10.1177/003172170909000709>
- Guskey, T. R. (2007). Closing achievement gaps: Revisiting Benjamin S. Bloom’s “Learning for Mastery.” *Journal of Advanced Academics*, 19(1), 8–31. <https://doi.org/10.4219/jaa-2007-704>
- Hochberg, E. D., & Desimone, L. M. (2010). Professional development in the accountability context: Building capacity to achieve standards. *Educational Psychologist*, 45(2), 89–106. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00461521003703052>
- Knapp, M. S. (2003). *Chapter 4: Professional development as a policy pathway*. Review of research in education, 27(1), 109-157.
- King, M. B., & Newmann, F. M. (2001). Building school capacity through professional development: conceptual and empirical considerations. *International Journal of Educational Management*, 15(2), 86–94. <https://doi.org/10.1108/09513540110383818>
- Noom-ura, S. (2013). English-teaching problems in Thailand and Thai teachers’ professional development needs. *English Language Teaching*, 6(11). <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v6n11p139>
- Penuel, W. R., Fishman, B. J., Yamaguchi, R., & Gallagher, L. P. (2007). What makes professional development effective? Strategies that foster curriculum implementation. *American Educational Research Journal*, 44(4), 921–958. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0002831207308221>
- Richards, J. C., & Farrell, T. S. (2005). *Professional development for language teachers: Strategies for teacher learning*. Cambridge University Press.
- Supovitz, J. A., & Turner, H. M. (2000). The effects of professional development on science teaching practices and classroom culture. *Journal of Research in Science Teaching*, 37(9), 963–980. [http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/1098-2736\(200011\)37:9<963::aid-tea6>3.0.co;2-0](http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/1098-2736(200011)37:9<963::aid-tea6>3.0.co;2-0)
- Supovitz, J. A. (2002). Developing communities of instructional practice. Teachers college record. *The Voice of Scholarship in Education*, 104(8), 1591–1626. <https://doi.org/10.1177/016146810210400805>
- Villegas-Reimers, E. (2003). *Teacher professional development: an international review of the literature*. Paris: International Institute for Educational Planning.
- Youngs, P. (2001). District and state policy influences on professional development and school capacity. *Educational Policy*, 15(2), 278–301. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0895904801015002003>
- Zhang, W., & Creswell, J. (2013). The use of “mixing” procedure of mixed methods in health services research. *Medical Care*, 51(8), e51–e57. <https://doi.org/10.1097/mlr.0b013e31824642fd>